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著者	Chen Shulin, Akita Noriko
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Rural Complex

An Attempt to Coordinate the Development of Urban and Rural Areas in China

Shulin Chen¹ and Noriko Akita^{2*}

¹ College of Design and Innovation, Fujian Jiangxia University

² Graduate School of Horticulture, Chiba University

* Corresponding Author, Email: noriko@faculty.chiba-u.jp

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Abstract: With the rapid development of China's urbanization, the gap between the development level of China's cities and villages is becoming more and more obvious. The rapid increase in the urban population has aggravated the utilization of urban land resources. While rural areas have a large number of residential land, the population is decreasing year by year, which presents great potential for development. How to coordinate the relationship between urban and rural areas has become an important issue in China. In recent years, the Chinese government has made a series of attempts in the peri-urbanization areas between cities and villages. In 2017, based on the project named New Pastoralism, the central government in China put forward a planning mode named Rural Complex, which retains the local residents and forms a community to attract new residents, also with the aid of tourism to attract consumers from the city. As a pilot project, New Pastoralism has been operating for several years. As a pilot scheme, it brings some good effects but it also has some defects, especially in its management. Meanwhile there are few studies on its management, operation, and its effects on urban-rural development in China.

This paper will take the New Pastoralism project as an example, studying its defects as well as the positive influence of its planning, construction, operation, and management modes based on the related policies, to discuss whether the Rural Complex can play a positive role in coordinating urban-rural development in China.

1. INTRODUCTION

Urbanization is regarded as a kind of diffusion wave that is controlled by the changing accessibility of places and people's lifestyles ([Antrop, 2004](#)). So the relation between urban and rural becomes extremely complex, the urban agglomeration and the countryside of many cities in the world is becoming unclear and diffuse ([SPESP, 2000](#)).

From the perspective of urban and rural structures, urban and rural areas are significantly different in their population size, cultural tradition, and people's ways of living. In 2018, China's permanent urban population reached about 831 million, 17.9 million more than that at the end of 2017. The number of permanent rural residents reached about 564 million, a

decrease of 12.6 million. The outflow of the rural population will may make the gap between urban and rural areas increasingly obvious, which is bad for the coordinated development of urban and rural areas in China. Similar imbalanced situations exist throughout the world; many countries have considered lots of means to solve the urban-rural divide in economic and social development.

Tourism is often regarded as the driving industry of the urban-rural development in China as well as other countries. The combination of tourism and agriculture is conducive to promoting the development of rural economy and bridging the gap between urban and rural development to a certain extent.

For example, at the end of the 20th century in Europe, especially in Eastern Europe, tourism was widely promoted as a means of addressing the social and economic challenges faced by the surrounding rural areas, primarily those related to the decline of traditional agricultural industries due to a rapid rise of rural unemployment in the last decade ([Cavaco, 1995](#); [Hoggart, Buller, & Black, 1995](#); [Williams & Shaw, 1998](#); [Ratz & Puczko, 1998](#); [Simpson, Chapman, & Mahne, 1998](#)). At the beginning of the 21st century, agritourism became increasingly popular in Europe and brought several benefits. For example, agritourism brought new life and economic growth to both rural and urban areas in Cyprus ([Richard, 2002](#)).

In the United States, although the development of rural tourism is not as great as that in Europe at that time 30 states had formulated tourism policies specifically targeting rural areas, and 14 states included rural tourism in their overall tourism development plans ([Luloff et al., 1994](#)). In Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and other countries and regions, tourism is also regarded as an engine to promote rural economic growth and diversification ([Hall & Jenkins, 1998](#)). But most of the countries are experiencing less agricultural tourism income than expected. It is not only a challenge to the development of rural tourism, but also a challenge to the diversification potential of tourism ([Richard, 2002](#)).

In China, since 2003, the central government began to pay special attention to the relationship between urban and rural areas. Based on related policies, in 2007 and 2014 Chongqing, Chengdu, and Suzhou were designated as pilot regions in succession. The pilot regions have had a certain success in narrowing urban-rural gaps in aspects such as land, financial revenue, public infrastructure, and so on. From the initial stage of "sightseeing agriculture" to "rural tourism", "leisure agriculture" and "beautiful countryside", the Chinese government is always exploring various new models of the countryside, agriculture, and tourism in the semi-urbanized areas and rural areas. The concept of Rural Complex was first proposed in the 'No. 1' central document of China in 2017. As a new form of urbanization in China as well as a highlight in the development of the rural area, the Rural Complex construction is conducive to the intensive use of resources and the effective implementation of the rural revitalization strategy. Through the combination of agriculture, community, and culture, the region itself can be self-sustained, to relieve the pressure of cities on the one hand, and promote the interaction and communication between cities and villages on the other hand, to narrow the economic and cultural gap between cities and villages in China.

As a hot topic, research about the Rural Complex has developed gradually from the initial theoretical exploration to planning and the pilot project construction in recent years. Most of the research has focussed on the good effects the project brought, instead of some defects, especially in its

management. Nobody knows whether or not the Rural Complex can run well. So, this paper will take the first Rural Complex project, New Pastoralism, as an example, studying its planning, construction, operation, and management mode to explore the possibility of its future development.

2. OVERVIEW OF RURAL COMPLEX

2.1 Definition

Rural Complex, also called Pastoral Complex, was proposed in 2017. The central 'No. 1' document of China mentions: "Efforts are made to support the qualified rural areas to build Rural Complex with farmers' cooperatives as the main carrier, which farmers participate in and benefit from and which integrates circular agriculture, creative agriculture, and farming experience. A pilot demonstration is carried out through comprehensive agricultural development, rural comprehensive reform of transfer payment, and so on ([Central government in China, 2017](#)). As can be seen from the 'No. 1 file', the Rural Complex is a mode that complies with the rural reform and the development of new industries under the pattern of urban-rural integration, to realize the rural modernization and all-round development of social economy in China. Based on "original agriculture, rural areas, and rural residents", "Ecology, Production and Life" and "Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Industries", and based on the ideas of industrial agglomeration and industrial integration development, the Rural Complex, takes rural scenery and the rural environment as the background, leisure and sightseeing as core functions, comprehensive development as methods, combined with rural culture and rural life, making full use of various resources, to create a new complex model which integrates ecology, creativity, leisure, experience and benefits to farmers. It is the result of the development of traditional agricultural sightseeing, and also the exploration of the new model of rural development.

2.2 Relevant regulations

Since the concept of Rural Complex was proposed in 2017, China has not yet issued a relative policy about this kind of mode at the national level. At present, most regulations are normative documents issued by various ministries of China (*Table 1*). The construction regulations formulated by provincial governments are based on national normative documents and local conditions. From the perspective of the promulgation departments and contents of various normative documents, the construction of Rural Complex focuses on agriculture, rural areas, and farmers.

Table 1. The normative documents issued by ministries of China

Date of issue	Ministry of issue	Name of documents	Contents and functions
2017.05.24	Ministry of Finance of China	Notice on carrying out the pilot construction of Rural Complex	18 provinces were identified to carry out pilot projects for building Rural Complexes, and the central government will make overall arrangements from transferring payments for comprehensive rural reform, funds for developing modern agricultural production and subsidies for comprehensive agricultural development to support the

			pilot projects .1-2 pilot projects will be arranged in each pilot province. After passing the annual assessment by the Ministry of Finance of China, the pilot projects can continue to arrange central financial funds, and the projects with unsatisfactory pilot effects will no longer have financial support.
2017.05.31	(1)Ministry of Finance of China (2) Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of China	Opinions on deepening cooperation between the government and social capital in agriculture	Give priority to guiding and encouraging social capital to participate in Rural Complex, and support rural construction with farmers' cooperatives as the main carrier, allowing farmers to fully participate in and benefit from the development of Rural Complexes that integrate circular agriculture, creative agriculture and farming experience.
2017.05.31	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of China	Notice on promoting the implementation of policies on the development of leisure agriculture and rural tourism	support the development of leisure agriculture, actively innovate the ways of fiscal input and use, explore and promote the cooperation between government and social capital, comprehensively consider the use of construction before subsidy, discount interest, compensation by prize, guarantee subsidy and risk compensation, to let the financial investment go into the construction of Rural Complex.
2017.06.05	Ministry of Finance of China	Notice on implementing plan of pilot program for comprehensive rural reform	To notify that a pilot program of Rural Complex will be started.
2017.06.26	Ministry of Finance of China	Notice on the application for the industrialization development project of comprehensive agricultural development in 2018	Points out what local conditions should be, comprehensive agricultural development should be, combined with the pilot construction of Rural Complex and agricultural production areas, and to promote the development of a modern agricultural industry.

3. THE FIRST RURAL COMPLEX: NEW PASTORALISM

3.1 Location and construction Background

Before the construction of the New Pastoralism project, villages in Yangshan town were lacking in support facilities such as for medical treatment and education, and residents' lifestyles were mainly relying on primary industry, while the foundation of secondary and tertiary industries was weak. With the rapid development of urbanization, more and more people want to live in the urban areas, a large number of rural labour force flooded into cities, and rural labour productivity was insufficient, resulting in the imbalance of industrial structure. However, Yangshan, where these villages are located, has good resource conditions. The area used to be a volcanic area, so it has a unique natural landscape and hot spring resources,

more than 467ha of the ecological forest, about 10 km² of the mountainous area, and is known as the "green oxygen bar". Based on the excellent ecological environment, Yangshan pays special attention to the protection of the ecological environment and has carried out a series of ecological urbanization works. Also, this town has a history of peach planting for over 70 years due to its fertile soil. It is one of the four traditional peach producing areas in China, with an existing peach forest of about 1,333ha. It is also known as the "Hometown of Peach" in China. Good resources also provide conditions for the construction of the New Pastoralism project, which became an important reason for the construction site selection of the New Pastoralism project in Yangshan. At the same time, the construction of the New Pastoralism is under the background of the concept of "the new urbanization", "beautiful country" and "new agriculture", which was put forward by the central government of China. Also, it is a response to the concept of "actively combining efficient agriculture and tertiary industry services together", which was put forward by the government of Yangshan, and aims to further promote agricultural intensification, organizational, social, ecological management systems, promote the peach industry's agricultural technology development, and cultivate a new type of professional farmer. In that way, rural can be pushed by the city and agriculture can be promoted by other industries to make up for the current industrial imbalance in Yangshan, the lack of employment, the decrease of the rural population, the slow growth of agricultural output, and other common issues in rural areas in China.

3.2 Overall planning

The total area of New Pastoralism is about 416ha, and the current land within the planning scope is mainly houses, farmlands, peach groves, and water areas. With the concept of "serving local residents, new residents and tourists", and based on respecting the conditions of the base, protecting the original road structure, water network structure, rural landscape, and rural pattern, the planning takes peach planting as a characteristic basic industry, and takes the integration of production, life and ecology as well as the integration of agriculture, processing industry and service industry as the development model. *Figure 1* shows the land use before and after. With "rural life" as the core goal, the plan aims to create three sections of modern agriculture, leisure tourism, and rural community, and create a countryside that integrates production, life, tourism, culture, education, and other functions. Yangshan peaches have been well known in Jiangsu province, Zhejiang province, Shanghai, and other neighbouring areas, but it is still not well known in the whole of China. Therefore, the planning of New Pastoralism plans to further develop its characteristic peach industry, to improve the Yangshan peach industry supply chain, including processing, transportation, sales, and the construction of peach demonstration areas. As an exploratory practice, the general plan of the project divides the land into two phases. The first phase is 40hm² and has been opened as a practical demonstration area, while the second phase is 376hm² and started to be constructed in 2017 ([Wang, Yu, & Xu, 2017](#)).



Figure 1. Land use before (left) and after (right) construction

The first phase area is located in the southeast of the whole complex (Figure 2), which is composed of three parts: peach production demonstration area (modern agriculture), culture creative area (cultural and tourism), and pastoral community (community) (Li, L., 2016), shown in Figure 3.



Figure 2. Location of 1st phase of New Pastoralism



Figure 3. Three parts of 1st phase

(1) Peach production demonstration area: It plans to develop five sectors, peach planting, fishery, vegetable and fruit cultivation, organic farm and seedling cultivation, to create special activities of each season. With circular agriculture, intelligent agriculture, and factory agriculture as the

development goals, through the operation mode of "Park + Enterprises + Farmers" to drive farmers. Firstly, local farmers are trained to engage in rural farming and solve their problem of unemployment. Secondly, scientific research institutions and universities cooperate to offer a research base. Finally, the government cooperates to develop and promote local agricultural brands.

(2) Culture creative area: Before the planning, the architectural space in this area has great spontaneity and disorder. The planning sorts out and optimizes the current situation of all kinds of space (residential space, green space, architectural space, public open space, etc.) and reshapes the spatial texture of the countryside. For the renovation of old buildings, the original architectural style and spatial scale should be restored as much as possible, so that the new functions can be borne.

(3) Pastoral community: This area is the starting area of New Pastoralism, which is a residential area. This area is for villas and low-rise houses, serving local residents and new immigrants, as well as tourists for short stays or long stays. Community development can be divided into two types: one is using collective construction land for development, the other is using state-owned construction land for development.

3.3 Operation mode

The planning is a typical model of integrated development, that is, the way of industrial integration. Firstly, resources are introduced to make full use of the advantages of the peach industry, and the agricultural structure is adjusted to change from the single production function of agriculture to the development mode of "agriculture + leisure experience". Land value is increased through tourism consumption and housing sales, followed by the improvement of supporting facilities to attract tourists and new residents, that is, by developing tourism projects, creating a good ecological environment, to attract tourists, increase popularity, enhance regional value, and spread new ideas to the society through network publicity. At the same time, construction and sales of real estate projects were started, and the profits from the real estate sales were used to improve supporting facilities and further development. The reason for adopting this mode of operation is that in consideration of the problem of funding operation, due to the large planning area of New Pastoralism, the high cost of land transfer, and the integration of its planning and rural planning, the development is carried out in the rural background. If only the combination of agriculture and tourism is adopted, the income at the initial stage of construction is difficult to be guaranteed, and the combination with real estate can solve this problem. Commercializing agriculture in later operations, extends the agricultural industry chain, commercializing agriculture, and actively cooperating with other enterprise teams to improve the project extensibility. Expanding the agricultural function and the experience function of agriculture, builds an overall pattern of three industries' interactive development.

The operation and management of New Pastoralism are mainly conducted by government, enterprises, rural cooperatives, and local residents. The government gives subsidies to local residents to get the land and support rural cooperatives and enterprises both in a political and financial way. The enterprises are responsible for the development, planning, operation, and management with the help of rural cooperatives, and some local residents are employed in the project to participate, as in *Figure 4*. About the land transfer in detail, Yangshan ensures three things in construction: the land collective

ownership of farmers will not be changed, agricultural land-use will not be changed, farmers' interests will not be damaged. The biggest difference from other places in the land transfer is the introduction and upgrading of industry. There are two modes of local farmland transfer, which are chosen by the villagers themselves. One is to exchange the right of land contract for jobs in New Pastoralism, so that farmers in Yangshan will lose their land but will get a formal job. The second is the separation of the land contract right and the land management right. The villagers give the land management right to the cooperatives for the unified and centralized planting and operation of peaches, and share out the profits every year, turning the farmers' land management right into assets. The developers would prefer that people choose the second model because farmers can keep their land and the cost of the transfer is much lower. But for now, most villagers in Yangshan choose the first model because the formal jobs are more attractive.

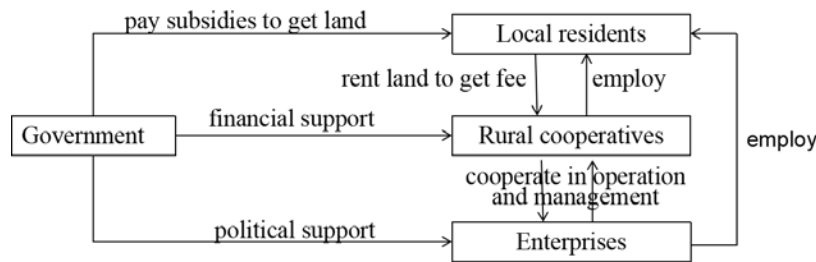


Figure 4. Operation management mechanism

In the process of the project, the enterprise called New Pastoralism Investment Ltd. takes the main role, which includes two big parts: the part of the investment and the part of operation and management. Mainly, six companies are joined in the operation and management, which includes site planning and designing, activities' planning, project development and operation, and amusement project construction and operation (Figure 5), but New Pastoralism is mainly managed by Wuxi New Pastoralism Property Management Co. Ltd. (Orient Landscape Co. Ltd.). Among them, New Pastoralism Agricultural Development Co. Ltd. uses the garden farm operation concept to complete the intensive agriculture and forestry, artistic and ecological requirements. Apart from that, the Hongqiao villagers' committee of Yangshan town, and Zhuji villagers committee of Yangshan town also participate.

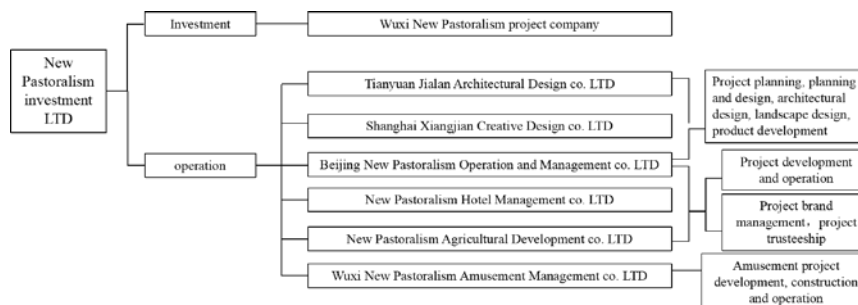


Figure 5. The role of New Pastoralism Investment Ltd. (From the home page of Orient Landscape Co. Ltd.)

3.4 Benefits

Though New Pastoralism has operated for many years, there are no direct data about it, however some information from Huishan District is available because in Huishan District there is no other big project like New Pastoralism.

(1) Economic benefits

Agricultural sales profit: The park selects high-yielding, high-efficient, and high-quality crop varieties and applies the latest agricultural scientific and technological achievements to improve the growing environment and conditions for crops, which not only improves the crop yield but also ensures the quality of agricultural products and makes agricultural products more competitive in the market. Since the establishment of the park, the annual income is about 71 million RMB (*Table 2*).

Table 2. Agricultural Output Value in Huishan District

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Agricultural Output Value (billion RMB)	2.65	2.87	2.98	3.11	3.02	3.06	3.08

Real estate earnings: The sales of real estate projects in New Pastoralism bring a large number of funds to support the development of other projects and the improvement of infrastructure, which solves the problem that it is difficult for tourism projects to make profit in a short time. Also, real estate projects have their own value preservation and appreciation. As far as consumers are concerned, investment in real estate projects is stable to a certain extent, because they are relatively low-risk projects with great appreciation potential.

Tourism project profit: The disadvantages of tourism projects are having a long construction period and long payback period, with a large investment in the early stage of the project, and its advantage is stable income over the operational period ([Li, W., 2016](#)). New Pastoralism constantly improves the construction of surrounding facilities, gradually establishes its own brand, and realizes the appreciation of the whole project. Tourism revenue in the Huishan district reached 1.34 billion RMB in 2018 (*Table 3*).

Table 3. Tourism income in Huishan District

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Tourism income(billion RMB)	0.33	unknown	unknown	0.63	0.70	0.79	1.34

(2) Ecological Benefit

The planning is committed to improving the agricultural ecological environment of the area, reducing the energy consumption of agricultural production from traffic and water conservancy engineering measures, and reducing the waste of agricultural irrigation water. Through the adjustment of industrial structure and the development of planting and breeding technology, as well as the promotion of ecological recycling plant technology, material recycling, and waste resource utilization can be promoted. At the same time, the construction of New Pastoralism connects previously scattered and fragmented agricultural lands, forming large green patches, providing more possibilities for the survival of some plants and

animals, and contributing to the improvement of the ecosystem and the increase of biodiversity.

(3) Social Benefit

After its completion, New Pastoralism can effectively integrate local advantageous industries and facilitate the transformation and upgrading of agriculture, from traditional agriculture to modern agriculture, from decentralized agriculture to large-scale agriculture, and from inefficient and polluting agriculture to efficient and sustainable agriculture. With the help of enterprises, the chain of characteristic industries will be extended to realize the effective interaction of primary, secondary and tertiary industries and the prosperity and development of the agricultural circular economy. Planning itself involves a large number of labourers, technology, and investment, which can solve the problem of the local employment situation. In 2018, more than 8,000 local people were employed in the Huishan district.

3.5 The defects in the New Pastoralism project

Rural Oriental effectively combines the development of city, countryside, and agriculture together, which has a strong reference significance for the development of livable villages and towns. Every coin has two sides, with the development and operation of the project, many defects have been exposed at the same time.

Rural-Oriental effectively combines the development of city, countryside, and agriculture together, which has a strong reference significance for the development of livable villages and towns. Every coin has two sides; with the development and operation of the project, many defects are exposed at the same time.

(1) Defects in industrial development

The defects of industrial development are mainly reflected in the following aspects: the development focus has been shifted, the industrial technology may face a shortage, and the industrial driving capacity is insufficient. Agriculture is the foundation and leading industry of New Pastoralism, so the construction of New Pastoralism is expected to support agriculture by making profits from the real estate. In the first phase of development, the investment is 1.8 billion RMB, of which 1.2 billion RMB is used for the construction of real estate. During the early stage of construction, the agricultural industry was not technical enough and the marketization degree was not so high, which led to limited development of the surrounding agriculture and rural industries. While the profits of real estate development are large, so, unfortunately, the development focus was shifted to real estate development, and the newborn residential area became the key to the operation. Most of the owners in these residential blocks are middle class, and the villas they buy are mainly used for vacation, as a "second home" far away from the city. Therefore, the vacancy rate is higher on workdays, which causes a waste of resources. Also, this project is built against the background of rural areas, and the cultural industry is one of the main industries. However, in fact, except for peach culture, rural culture itself has not been well inherited.

(2) Defects in management

The defects are mainly reflected in the quality of the staff. The central government puts forward the idea of taking farmers as the main subjects, emphasizes that the interests of farmers should be protected, the appeals of farmers should not be ignored in the development, and farmers should be taken as the basis to fully participate in the Rural Complex. One professor in

China noted that due to the scattered rural households, the most suitable development mode for the Rural Complex is "leading enterprises + cooperatives + farmers" (Kong, 2017). But that does not mean involving farmers in management. New Pastoralism uses this kind of operation and management mode and employs local villagers as staff, but most farmers have not received management training. Therefore, the management quality of the staff is not so high and the service is not so good. At the same time, as employees, farmers cannot share the benefits brought by the development of the project, and not only due to the misunderstanding of policy, at the same time, this issue can also be traced back to problems in land circulation. Some residents choose to transfer their land management rights and get a fixed income. According to the data, the way of interest distribution is: the contractor gets 70% of the floating income every year, the villagers get 20% according to the land area of transfer, the middle companies get 5%, the village committees get 4%, and the cooperatives get 1%. The villagers who choose this way enjoy the fixed income of 2.55 RMB/m² per year. Even if the land can be retained in this way, the income is low, and the villagers and the middle companies always have disputes on the distribution of interests, so most villagers will choose to sell the land to New Pastoralism in exchange for the work there.

(3) Threats in long-term operation

The visitors of New Pastoralism are mainly from urban cities in Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Shanghai. Influenced by the 5+2 living mode of visitors (working days in the city, weekends in the countryside) and the seasonality of agricultural products, the project has obvious low and high tourist seasons, with the following characteristics: the peach blossom season has a large passenger flow, accounting for about 50% of the annual tourists, and the maximum reception capacity is 7,000 persons a day. Weekend and national holiday passenger flows are higher, visitors for leisure vacation accounted for 80-90%. Even on weekdays and not holiday seasons, some business meetings and conferences will be held to support the operation, but the proportion is only 10-20%, and the operation and maintenance of the project still mainly relies on the leisure holiday customers.

Before the construction of New Pastoralism, Yangshan town had held more than ten peach festivals, which laid a certain tourism foundation. The data is not public, so we can only get the relevant data of the Huishan district (Table 4).

In 2014, the first year of its opening, data showed that the number of tourists increased by 48%. From the data of Huishan district, it can be roughly estimated that the number of tourists in the district achieved an average annual increase of about 20%. From 2013 to 2016, for four years, the number of visitors grew by about 1 million. However, it can be roughly estimated that in 2016, the number of tourists in New Pastoralism is less than 1 million. Roughly according to China's current statistics, for artificial scenic spots, it is difficult to have a sustainable operation when the visitor numbers are less than 1 million a year. So, it will be a great challenge for New Pastoralism to survive in the future.

Table 4. The number of tourists in Huishan District

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
The number of tourists (million)	1.20	1.65	2.44	2.33	2.63	2.92	4.74

4. POTENTIAL DISADVANTAGES IN RURAL COMPLEX MODE

It can be concluded from the case of New Pastoralism that there are mainly the following potential disadvantages in the development of Rural Complex:

4.1 Land issues

The land issue has always been considered as one of the difficulties for the implementation of the Rural Complex. According to the requirements of the central government, farmers are the main parts of the Rural Complex, and agriculture is the basic industry in the industrial chain. As a Rural Complex, there is diversity in land use, including farmers' self-owned houses, vacant houses, rural collective construction land, wasteland, barren hills, etc. ([China Rural News, 2018](#)), and the increase or decrease of urban and rural construction land is linked to each other. For the construction of a Rural Complex with a large scale, solving the problem of land supply is the key to construction. At present, there are four main methods for the Rural Complex to acquire land: the first is the land bank, the second is establishing cooperatives based on land shares, the third is the consolidation of the rural vacant house and abandoned land, the fourth is the land replacement, leasing, joint investment and so on.

Taking farmers' houses as an example, most farmers in China operate on small scale farmlands, so the land in the rural area is scattered. Therefore, for a large amount of land for the Rural Complex, the permission of many farmers is needed to be obtained, from farmers who have different opinions on the construction of agricultural and rural development projects. When a unified opinion is not reached, the whole project construction will be affected, which will restrict the land use of a large area of the Rural Complex. At the same time, there are multiple land use red lines for construction: no occupation of basic farmland, no exceeding land use planning, and no expansion of agricultural land for facilities ([China Rural News, 2018](#)). Farmland transfer in China is still controversial, particularly if land is to be used for construction purposes and then used in real estate development and for other non-agricultural purposes. At present, the construction of some Rural Complexes adopts evasive measures: the construction of accommodation directly in the name of facility agricultural land, construction in the name of temporary production houses, building restaurants in greenhouses, etc. These methods have a great risk of uncertainty.

4.2 Protection of farmers' interests

The protection of farmers' interests is an important factor to test the effect of the Rural Complex. In the interest distribution of the Rural Complex, farmers' income mainly comes from three aspects: as a shareholder of the village collective company or the rural operation platform, getting dividends from land on schedule, or renting land for rent. Becoming an enterprise employee to obtain the labour reward requires sale of their land and building on the land. Currently, the operation of the Rural Complex is more dependent on external investment; enterprises, farmers, and the government should cooperate on the construction of an interest structure, rather than this

being dominated by a single party. If the leader of the project is mainly enterprises, farmers' interests are unlikely to be taken up; the protection of farmers' interests is not only economic interests but also cultural interests. In a real Rural Complex, there are not only the original farmers, but also the new residents who are attracted by the countryside and willing to return to the countryside from the city and participate in the rural development. They need to connect and integrate cultures, both traditional and modern, which will make Rural Complex more valued.

4.3 System development issues

The three cores of the Rural Complex are agricultural production, rural life, and rural landscape. In the future, the rural areas will no longer be a single place for agricultural production, so it is necessary to solve the problem of sustainable and ecological livability. For the residents who live and work in the Rural Complex year-round, they need modern supporting infrastructure, such as work and life services, to meet the needs of residents. At the same time, the needs of the surrounding people for leisure and vacation also need to be considered, so as to realize a new community. In this process, the conflicts among the old residents, the new residents, and the visitors, as well as the relationship between agriculture, tourism, and culture, should be correctly handled, and the companies should be correctly guided to join in the construction of this new kind of community.

5. CONCLUSION AND PROSPECT

As an attempt to solve the problems between urban and rural areas, there are still many defects in Rural Complex, such as industrial development defects, management defects, land defects, system development defects, etc., but there is no denying the Rural Complex will bring some benefits for local residents, new residents, tourists, and even wider regions. For original residents, Rural Complex provides a wealth of employment opportunities for local residents; they can receive an income from both agriculture and tourism industries. It also provides good careers for young people who return to their hometown for employment. In addition, improving the rural environment and leisure activities enables the local people to enjoy a better life. For new residents, Rural Complex affords citizens who yearn for a pastoral life the opportunity to live in the rural area. At the same time, the new residents bring different ideas and lifestyles to the rural area, and the local residents and new residents become beneficiaries in interaction with each other. For tourists, Rural Complex offers pastoral leisure and tourism products different from traditional agritainment, creating a rich and high-quality pastoral experience for children, families, couples, and business travellers.

In the face of various defects existing in the Rural Complex, in the most critical aspect of land use, the government has supported land policy recently and explored the establishment of a security mechanism. According to the 'No. 1' document of the central government issued in 2017, saving construction land such as for village renovation, will be allowed to take the form of investment, joint operation, and other means. The integrated development of rural leisure, tourism, old-age care, and other industries and rural tertiary industries will be supported as a priority. Policies on agricultural land will be improved. The construction of facilities for primary

processing, picking, and storage of agricultural products will be actively supported ([Central government in China, 2017](#)). Now, pilot projects are also being carried out in various provinces and cities in China, and if this model is successful in the future, it will help the common development of urban and rural areas.

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